

VZCZCXRO0658
OO RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #2441/01 2000945
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 180945Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7846
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 8879
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 8316
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 3537
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 0044
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 5787
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 4566
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 002441

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#)

SUBJECT: QURESHI TALKS TOUGH ON MILITANTS WITH BOUCHER

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (C) Summary: Assistant Secretary Boucher met July 2 with Foreign Minister Qureshi. Qureshi assured Boucher that the new Pakistani government would not "shy away from using force" against militants in either the frontier areas or in other parts of Pakistan. He argued that recent Frontier Corps operations in Bara proved that the government would enforce any negotiated peace accords. Qureshi reported that Pakistan was now ready to go forward with the next joint jirga with Afghanistan. Qureshi was encouraged by his recent visit to India, having proposed four "doable" areas on which he believed the two countries could demonstrate cooperation. Qureshi said he looked forward to visiting the U.S. in July and asked that the next Strategic Dialogue to be scheduled in Washington in September. End summary.

"Multi-Pronged"

- - - - -

12. (C) Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher, Ambassador Patterson and National Security Council Senior Director Mark Webber met July 2 with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. Qureshi began his July 2 meeting by noting the recent armed engagement in the Bara region of the Khyber Agency. Qureshi said that the government's use of force in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas proved that its announced strategy to deal with insurgents was truly "multi-pronged." As a newly-elected government, the coalition was willing to broker peace accords, in the hope of "separating the good from the bad." However, Qureshi added, "we will not shy away from using force either."

13. (C) Boucher stressed that the U.S. supported Pakistan's policy to negotiate with tribal leaders but not with militants. He agreed that forceful action in Bara, just outside Peshawar, had been necessary. The U.S., he noted, also believed that the separate peace accord in the Northwest Frontier Province's Swat region had been breached. The government must ensure "active enforcement," he added.

14. (C) Qureshi responded, "If they go back on their word in Swat, we will react there too." Qureshi said he was fine with Baitullah Mehsud's reported threat to call off talks on Swat over the Government's actions in the tribal areas. He concluded: "We have to engage politically, but we will not be bullied."

Afghanistan

- - - - -

¶5. (C) Qureshi raised President Hamid Karzai's recent controversial statement that Afghanistan troops might cross into Pakistan to go after militant elements. Qureshi believed his own response to this "unfortunate" public remark was calm and composed and hoped such criticisms would be communicated in private in the future. Boucher warned, however, that the U.S. continued to be concerned about the increased attacks into eastern Afghanistan supported from Pakistan's tribal areas.

¶6. (C) The Assistant Secretary encouraged resumption of the bilateral Pakistan-Afghanistan jirga process. Qureshi reported that Pakistan's delegation list, coordinated by the Interior Ministry, was now final. He explained the delay was caused because the new Pakistan Government wanted to get input from the provincial governments of the Northwest Frontier and Balochistan. The delegation had grown to 32 (above the 25 limit), and its lead had yet to be decided. He guessed the Interior Ministry or Foreign Ministry would head up the delegation; a tribal leader might not be sufficiently dispassionate, Qureshi added. Boucher stressed that such jirgas sent an important message to the militants that both countries would and could cooperate.

A.Q. Khan
- - - - -

¶7. (C) Boucher noted U.S. dissatisfaction at the recent availability of A.Q. Khan. He questioned which governmental authority had loosened the restrictions on Khan. Without replying directly, Qureshi assured the Assistant Secretary

ISLAMABAD 00002441 002 OF 002

that Khan remained "isolated." Noting that Khan no longer held any position of official authority, "his bark is worse than his bite." Qureshi admitted, though, that Khan's statements had been detrimental to Pakistan's international reputation and had created suspicions in the international community.

India
- - -

¶8. (C) Turning to his recent visit to India, Qureshi felt he had "gelled" with Indian Prime Minister, having time to also meet with the Ministers of External Affairs and Energy. (Note: Qureshi's planned three-day trip was cut short because of a family death.) Qureshi said he raised four "doable" issues, for which he believed there was now domestic civilian-military concurrence and on which the two countries could demonstrate immediate cooperation: (1) Sir Creek demarcation; (2) Siachen resolution (to prevent economic and environmental loss); (3) visa liberalization (to encourage people-to-people exchanges); and (4) trade promotion.

¶9. (C) In seeking common ground with India, the Pakistani Government had a duty to convince the general population that a "peace dividend" was possible, Qureshi argued. He believed current bilateral trade was just the "tip of the iceberg," with plenty of growth possibilities in bilateral and transit trade. He said he presented his Indian counterpart with a list of 25 industries that could benefit from freer trade, naming cement and textiles specifically. He highlighted private initiatives across the border as well.

¶10. (C) In addition to these four issues, Qureshi said he also raised water and energy as another future topic for Pakistan-India discussions. He believed the two countries needed to consider an Indus River II Accord. Boucher praised the countries' river basin agreement as an example for the rest of the region.

Engagement
- - - - -

¶11. (C) Qureshi glowed over his recent meeting in Paris with

the Secretary. He looked forward to their meeting again in Washington during his upcoming trip to the U.S. Boucher noted that Prime Minister Gilani was also set to visit the U.S. in late July, and, hopefully, State Department's Economic Affairs Under Secretary would visit Pakistan in mid-July. Qureshi confirmed Pakistan's interest in the next Strategic Dialogue round for September in Washington. He asked for these bilaterals to be more regular and for agricultural issues to be added for discussion.

¶12. (C) Boucher pushed for a more cooperative Pakistani mission at the U.N., noting Pakistan's obstructionism on a few issues. Qureshi encouraged regular updates from Embassy, "at my level," on the most important upcoming issues, doubletracking discussions taking place at his mission in New York.

¶13. (U) Assistant Secretary Boucher's office cleared this message.

PATTERSON